



THE REAL COST: ADDICTION

It's generally accepted that cigarettes are bad for a person's health, but most smokers get hooked before they even realize they are addicted. The truth is that smoking can cause both immediate and long-term damage—and one of the first adverse health effects is nicotine addiction. Nicotine is a chemical found in the tobacco plant itself, and it is a highly addictive drug. On top of that, the design and content of modern cigarettes make them more addictive than ever before.

Teens' brains are still developing, making them more vulnerable to nicotine. This may be one reason many teens who try smoking become addicted. Tobacco use is almost always initiated and established during adolescence, and the younger a person starts, the more difficult it can be to stop.

QUICK FACTS

- 3 out of 4 teens who think they will stop smoking in 5 years, don't.
- Just a few cigarettes per month can lead to cravings in some teens.
- Chemicals, like ammonia, may enhance the brain's absorption of nicotine, thus increasing the addictiveness of the product.
- Some research suggests that menthols may be even more addictive than other cigarettes and may be harder for smokers to quit.
- A person who quits smoking may experience withdrawal symptoms at first, such as feeling more nervous and jittery, which may be interpreted as stress.
- However, research shows that people who quit smoking and stay smoke-free feel less stress than people who continue to smoke.

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Sources: Full sources for all facts are available at www.fda.gov/therealcost